

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6275

INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 08263

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: EFIN, EAID, CG, BE

SUBJECT: MOBUTU PLAN: BERGSTEN/WALKER CONSULTATION WITH BELGIANS

1. SUMMARY: DURING APRIL 26 CONSULTATION WITH BELGIANS ON MOBUTU PLAN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY BERGSTEN AND DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE WALKER WERE TOLD THAT BELGIAN GOVERNMENT HAD RECEIVED A NEW MOBUTU PLAN DRAFT, COMING FROM MINISTER OF PLANNING MULUMBA RATHER THAN PRESIDENCY COORDINATOR BOKANA. BELGIAN GOVERNMENT PROBABLY WILL PROPOSE A DATE IN LATE JUNE FOR CONVENING OF BRUSSELS INFORMAL INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION MEETING. END SUMMARY.

2. BERGSTEN AND WALKER MET APRIL 26 WITH A BELGIAN INTERAGENCY GROUP CHAIRED BY FOREIGN MINISTER'S DEPUTY CHEF DE CABINET (ONKELINX) AND INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE. THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE AND THE BANK OF BELGIUM. ONKELINX REVIEWED THE HISTORY OF THE ZAIRIAN REQUEST FOR BELGIAN ASSISTANCE IN MOUNTING AN INTERNATIONAL EFFORT TO REVIVE THE ZAIRE ECONOMY. HE SAID FOREIGN MINISTER SIMONET WOULD RECOMMEND TO BELGIAN CABINET APRIL 28 THAT A DATE IN THE LATTER PART OF JUNE BE SET FOR AN INFORMAL, WORKING-LEVEL MEETING IN BRUSSELS TO EXPLORE INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION WITH ZAIRE. BERGSTEN REITERATED THE U.S. READINESS IN PRINCIPLE TO ATTEND SUCH A MEETING BUT
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POSED THE QUESTION WHETHER MOBUTU AND ZAIRE WERE FULLY COMMITTED TO NEGOTIATING AND CARRYING OUT AN IMF STABILIZATION PLAN. CONSENSUS WAS A CLEAR ANSWER WOULD HAVE TO AWAIT THE OUTCOME OF THE IMF MISSION

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DUE IN KINSHASA MAY 4, BUT THAT, IN ANY EVENT, MOBUTU CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THAT PROGRESS ON THE IMF STABILIZATION NEGOTIATION WAS ONE OF THE PRECONDITIONS FOR CONVENING THE BRUSSELS MEETING.

ONKELINX SAID THAT THE MEETING COULD BE POSTPONED OR CANCELLED IF THE PRECONDITIONS WERE NOT MET. HE SAID BELGIUM WOULD NEVERTHE- LESS START THE BALL ROLLING FOR A JUNE MEETING - ONE YEAR AFTER MOBUTU FIRST REQUESTED BELGIAN HELP - TO AVOID THE CHARGE THAT BELGIUM WAS NOT DOING ANYTHING. HE REPEATED THAT BRUSSELS MEETING WAS "INFORMAL, EXPLORATORY NON-COMMITAL. EXCHANGE OF VIEWS AT THE WAKING LEVEL" AND THAT THE MEETING WOULD DISCUSS ANDEAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE PROPER MANNER AND VENUE FOR FOLLOW-UP ON THE MOBUTU PLAN. AT MEETINGS EARLIER IN THE DAY, WALKER ASKED IF THE BELGIANS SHARED OUR VIEW THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER FOR ZAIRIANS NOT TO BE PRESENT AT THE BRUSSELS MEETING. ONKELINX AGREED, AND JAENEN NOTED THAT THERE WAS AMPLE PRECEDENT IN THE PARIS CLUB SCENARIO FOR NOT INVITING ZAIRE TO PARTICIPATE. WALKER EMPHASIZED THAT ONE POSITIVE RESULT OF INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION ON THE MOBUTU PLAN WOULD BE THAT ALL GOVERNMENTS WOULD BE IN AGREEMENT ON WHAT ZAIRE SHOULD DO TO PUT ITS HOUSE IN ORDER SO THAT MOBUTU WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO "SHOP AROUND" FOR DIFFERENT ADVICE.

3. ONKELINX TOLD BERGSTEN AND WALKER THAT BELGIUM HAD JUST RECEIVED A NEW DRAFT MOBUTU PLAN, SIGNED BY MINISTER OF PLANNING MULUMBA AND PRESUMABLY PREPARED IN HIS SHOP RATHER THAN UNDER AEGIS OF PRESIDENCY MOBUTU PLAN COORDINATOR BOKANA (COPIES POUCHED TO DEPARTMENT AF/C APRIL 26 AND HAND CARRIED TO EMBASSY KINSHASA BY WALKER). BELGIANS STRESSED THAT THEY DID NOT KNOW THE POLITICAL STATUSOF THIS NEW DOCUMENT COMPARED TO THAT OF BOKANA DRAFT (OR OTHER GOZ WORKING PAPERS) BUTTHE MALDAGUE GROUP WOULD MEET APRIL 27
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TO STUDY THE DOCUMENT AND PROBABLY MAKE COMMENTS TO MULUMBA. ONKELINX TOLD WALKER EARLIER IN THE DAY THAT BELGIUM MIGHT SEND EXPERTS TO ZAIRE TO HELP COME UP WITH A SATISFACTORY WORKING DRAFTOF THE PLAN BUT WOULD NOT ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANY MOBUTU PLAN DRAFTTO BE SUBMITTED TO BRUSSELS MEETING. BELGIANS TOLD BERGSTEN AND WALKER THAT A QUICK LOOK AT NEW DRAFT REVEALED THAT IT CONTAINED A MACRO-ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF THE ZAIRE ECONOMY REplete WITH DATA AND FIGURES, ELEMENTS MISSING IN BOKANA DRAFT. QUALITY OF THIS DATA ANDANALYSIS WOULD ONLY BE DETERMINED BY CLOSER STUDY. ONKELINX PROMISED TO KEEP US APPRISED OF THEIR VIEWS AND ASKED THAT WE NOT LET ZAIRIANS KNOW THAT THEY PASSED US A COPY.

4. AT THE CLOSE OF THE SESSION, BERGSTEN ASKED THE BELGIANS WHAT THEY WOULD RECOMMEND HE EMPHASIZE IN MEETINGS IN KINSHASA. ONKELINX, IN REPLY, SAID BELGIUM COUNTED ON U.S. SUPPORT IN PROCEEDING WITH MOBUTU PLAN COOPERATION AND SUGGESTED THAT BERGSTEN AND WALKER STRESS WITH ZAIRE THE IMPORTANCE OF THREE PRECONDITIONS TO A BRUSSELS MEETING - MOVING AHEAD WITH BANK OF ZAIRE REORGANIZATION

AND IMF STAFFING; PROGRESS IN IMF STABILIZATION NEGOTIATIONS; AND THE IMPORTANCE OF A RESPECTABLE MOBUTU PLAN DRAFT - AS WELL AS THE NEED FOR OTHER INTERNATIONAL EXPERTS SPOTTED IN THE ZAIRIAN

GOVERNMENT.

5. THIS MESSAGE NOT CLEARED WITH BERGSTEN OR WALKER BEFORE THEIR
DEPARTURE FOR KINSHASA. CHAMBERS

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